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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 004808

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DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: TIP IN TURKEY: ANTI-TIP NGO HRDF BOARD CHAIRMAN
DISCUSSES VICTIMS SHELTER

1. (U) SUMMARY. In August meetings with Emboff, Human Resources Development Foundation (HRDF) Board Chairman Turgut Tokus outlined past and present progress to bring HRDF's TIP victims shelter on-line. He characterized support from the GOT, particularly the MOI and the MFA, as excellent and thanked Secretary Powell for dedicating Turkey's first shelter for victims of trafficking. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) HRDF Chairman Turgut Tokus told Emboff that officials within the Istanbul Municipality had originally opposed the establishment of a shelter facility for victims of trafficking based on complaints from neighborhood residents. Tokus said that residents, landlords and concerned citizens complained to the municipality when HRDF first approached them, opposed to the TIP shelter for various reasons including religious, moral, and security concerns. According to Tokus, the long search for a facility finally ended when Tokus discussed the situation with Turkish Security Directorate Foreigners Department Head Mehmet Terzioğlu and FonMin Abdullah Gul. Tokus characterized both officials as extremely helpful and said Gul intervened with the Istanbul mayor to make the shelter happen.

3. (U) With the shelter operational, Tokus said HRDF's next goal is to find a permanent facility. The Istanbul Municipality leases the current facility, an apartment in a local housing complex, and provides it free of charge to HRDF. Tokus repeated previous requests for donations of household supplies to stock the shelter. Emboff later delivered approximately 500 pounds of donated clothes and some household supplies, increasing the total donations from the Embassy Ankara community to more than 750 pounds of clothes and household goods.

4. (U) Tokus asked Emboff to relay his appreciation to Secretary Powell for congratulating HRDF for success in

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establishing a shelter for victims of trafficking. Tokus noted that Secretary Powell's visit to Turkey for the June NATO Summit played a critical role in focusing efforts to establish the shelter.

HRDF CONTINUES TIP FOCUS

5. (U) The 2003 HRDF Annual Report contains the following references to TIP:

"HRDF is a leading non-profit, non-governmental and autonomous organization working in Turkey to promote population and development education, information, training, services, and women's empowerment. Since its establishment in 1988 by 40 founding members, HRDF has developed, executed, implemented, and also participated in a number of projects and activities at national and international levels on a wide and versatile range of issues such as STIs & HIV/AIDS training and information, Education and Communication (IEC) community development, community-based health services, development of technical training materials for service providers, promoting children's rights and improving the socio-economic status of women. Since its establishment, HRDF has served 400,000 women, 30,000 health service providers, and 7,500 immigrants and refugees. Through these projects and activities, HRDF has accumulated remarkable experience and know-how in project development, implementation and assessment, and also partnership and coordination skills with various international organizations. Since 1997, HRDF has been a internationally accredited UNFPA executing agency. HRDF has a special consultative NGO status with UN Economic and Social Council."

"In 2003, HRDF carried out activities on reproductive health, sexual health, and community development for unprivileged groups. This year, activities were mainly based on training; approximately 700 people from various professional groups were trained in reproductive health and rights, sexual health, service provision and interpersonal communication, etc. HRDF has also started activities on combating Human Trafficking and made important steps in this field by signing an agreement with the Ministry of Interior."

"COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING"

"Human Trafficking is a global issue of the recent years that has both humane and criminal aspects. Besides to contribute to the enduring international studies to prevent human trafficking and to improve Turkey's national capacity on the subject, the main objective of the program developed by the HRDF is to raise the awareness of people living in Turkey on human trafficking. The program involves opening a shelter and counseling center and establishment of a wide network for collaboration of the NGO's in the region. Moreover, the program aims to carry out the training of the police and the prosecutors/judges directly involved in the combat with human trafficking. Within the scope of the Human Trafficking program and with support of the Open Society Institute (OSI), various NGOs in Moldova, Ukraine, Holland, and Austria have been visited and the studies for establishing a network have started. European Union and British Council are currently providing the financial support for the training programs. Attempts to find funds for the shelter and counseling center are still underway. The Ministry of Interior gave significant support to the activities that HRDF plans to carry out on human trafficking."

16. (U) An HRDF brochure entitled: Resource: Human! distributed by HRDF contains the following:

"PROBLEMS OF SEX WORKERS IN OUR COUNTRY"

"It appears that taboos in our minds and our inclination to hide the truth are obstacles to solving the problems of sex workers. HRDF sees assistance to all groups of human beings as part of its mission and tries to reach out to people who need help in every field. The Foundation works to provide information and education on sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS to sex workers who work under high risk. In Turkey, a project was carried out to improve the level of awareness and information of doctors and other health personnel on this topic. A guidebook is also being prepared for doctors in Azerbaijan."

"Sex workers are trained to help their co-workers. They work, on a volunteer basis for 'Gaci', a bi-monthly bulletin published as part of the project."

"THE WOMEN'S DOOR"

"Counseling services are provided to those with health and social problems at a center called 'the Women's Door,' established in a district where many sex workers live. The center also provides assistance to drug addicts."

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